

Royston Scrapbook 1897 to 1990

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
reported in Cambridge Newspapers
summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the Cambridgeshire Weekly News. They are supplemented by some articles published in the Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library together with have detailed cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the 1960s.

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at bit.ly/CambsCollection.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check. There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

Royston Scrapbook 1897 to 1990 compiled by Mike Petty

1897 02 26

Three menageries Royston Heath – racehorses

1897 03 25

The Royston fire brigade was in a most neglected condition. They had members who were ever ready to do their best in any emergency but it was impossible for them to do their work with hardly any hose. If a fire broke out in the High Street it would not be possible to work at it from the front and rear too. The building in which the engine was stowed away was low, damp and small, so small that the engine could hardly be got in and out of the place. (S. Camps speaking at Royston Public Meeting)

1897 04 23

Royston land sale, p3

1897 04 23

At the Crown Hotel, Royston, Messrs Nash Son and Rowley offered for sale building land, situate in and near to Queen's-road, Royston, cut up into 23 lots, of 25 foot frontage, some of it fronting on Queen's-road, and the rest on a new roadway to be called Victoria-place. There was a large company present and a fair demand for the most eligible plots. Most lots sold for £30 each. At the same time some property at Sandon House and shop and four cottages were sold to Mr Harold Clark for £300

1897 06 28

Royston jubilee, p3

1897 07 26

On Saturday afternoon the members of the Royston and Hitchin Associations of the National Union of Teachers held their annual picnic in the beautiful grounds of Odsey House. The company dispersed about the grounds, some going in for cricket (ladies v gentlemen), others for tennis and croquet, whilst others strolled about the grounds, which just now are looking very pretty. During the afternoon tea was served in one of the walks under the trees by Mr Rogers of the Railway Inn, Ashwell Station, who catered admirably, and the company again went back to their respective amusements. All were loud in their expressions of delight at the arrangements that had been made for their comfort and pleasure.

1897 08 06

Yesterday afternoon a terrible thunderstorm passed over Royston district. The storm commenced with a fearful downpour of rain accompanied by heavy lightning and thunder. The streets were deluged and stream like rivers coursed down the High-street, Market-hill and Back-street. Following upon this came a hailstorm, stones larger than marbles falling heavily and thickly. A good deal of glass was broken. A horse attached to a cart loaded with coal for Barley became frightened and bolted and the coal was scattered all along the road

1897 08 13

Royston flower show, p3

1897 08 24

At a meeting of the Royston Board of Guardians the question of London children coming into the country for a holiday and bringing infectious diseases with them was brought under consideration, cases of the kind having occurred in the locality. One case of scarlet fever had broken out at a house on the Moor, Melbourn to which three children had been sent by a holiday fund from Stoke Newington. Another was a case of diphtheria which had occurred at Meldreth at a house where 12 children from Stoke Newington were staying. A couple of cases had broken out also at Reed, in a house where London children were staying

1897 09 22

This month may be said to witness the coming of age of the town of Royston, as, after many years of sore trials and tribulations in the matter of local government, the unification of the town may be said to have been completed by the coming into operation of the order forming the town into an urban district. This is an end that has been long and patiently worked and waited for by the inhabitants

1897 10 25

Royston pub licences, p3

1898 01 05

Royston medical assistants, p4 *

1898 04 20

Sir - I have read with amusement the report which appeared in the Cambridge Daily News. Royston football players have not the slightest objection to their play being criticised, but they do expect that those to play the part of critic should, at least, show that they possess an elementary knowledge of the game, and should at any rate give an accurate account of the game. The obvious conclusion is that the writer of the report fully expected the smart team from Cambridge (the Swifts), with two or three county men, to make rings around the Roystonians and was very chagrined when he found the homesters more than held their own. Let us hope your correspondents will endeavour to educate himself in the rudiments of the game and you will try to be fair to both sides, and show in his report something of that sportsmanlike attitude that he wishes to see in others – R.S. Trudgett

1898 04 22

Royston blight, p3

Royston bike accident, p3

1898 06 03

As a horse attached to a 2-wheeled trap, and driven by a butcher boy, containing four fat pigs, belonging to Mr Clarke, Butcher, of Kneesworth Street, was proceeding down High street, Royston, a heavy peal of thunder caused the horse to come to almost a sudden standstill, thereby breaking both the shafts off close to the front board. The animal commenced to kick, and freeing itself from the trap, dashed down the street at a terrific rate, but fortunately did not come in to collision with any other vehicle, the streets at the time of the accident been quite clear of foot pedestrians and vehicles. The body of the trap containing the pigs pitched backwards and precipitated the driver on the back of his head into the road. The pigs were freed from their peculiar predicament by the cutting of the net which covered them.

1898 07 01

Royston twin bike, p3 *

1898 07 30

Royston new water works, p3

1898 08 30

Royston is almost approaching a water famine, owing to the wells of the Water Company being extremely low through the continued drought. It may be news to them to know that in a cottage not a hundred miles from Kneesworth Street, which has been unoccupied for some time, a tap has been pouring forth water for the past month. It would be well for the company to give this instance their attention and thus relieve the parishioners of the anxiety which would prevail at the rumour of the mere appearance of a water famine

1898 09 13

Royston wandering mechanic, p4

1898 10 26

The Rector of Buckland has refused to read the full burial service over the body of a man who was killed at Royston fair after he made an attempt to get upon one of horses on a steam roundabout while it was in motion. Failing in the attempt, he fell violently off the roundabout to the ground and was killed. That which weighed with the Rector in refusing to read the whole of the burial service was a doubt as to whether the poor man was sober when he met with his accident.

1898 12 28

On Christmas Eve the parish authorities at Steeple Morden were called upon to perform a strange act of seasonal charity. A young woman who had been seen about the neighbouring villages on the previous day gave birth to a child under a hedge by the wayside, where she had lain down to sleep, in the bitterly cold weather. The spot was far from human habitations and when the officials came on the scene they found the woman in a helpless plight and the new-born child dead by her side. They had her conveyed to the Union workhouse at Royston.

1899 01 10

At Royston Petty sessions a tramp described as a tailor out of employment was charged with feloniously stealing a pair of boots valued at 4s.11d. Prisoner was attired in a pair of policeman's trousers, with no boots on his feet, and only one sock. Joseph Reynolds, assistant to a baker in Gas road, Royston stated he saw prisoner against Mr Woods, the fishmongers shop. He saw him take a pair of boots which were hanging outside Messrs Soundy and Powell's shop. He gave information to P.C. Cookney of what he had seen

1899 01 30

A gas explosion occurred at Royston workhouse. It seemed for some time the master had suspected a defect in the pipes owing to the large quantity of gas that has been registered by the meter. On Friday escaping gas was detected in the front part of the House. A short time afterwards a loud report was heard in a room used by the male cook. The partition of lathe and plaster which divides it had been blown right across the table, the debris, which included a deal of crockery, being scattered in all directions. Had the explosion occurred a little later the cook would have been seriously injured, as his table was laid for tea at the time of the explosion.

1899 02 08

The funeral of John Sanderson took place at Guilden Morden. Deceased was well known as in addition to being a carrier to Royston he was a familiar figure at the feasts held in the district. On the arrival of the corpse at his home, the window of the cottage had to be removed before the coffin could be placed in the house. It was made of stout elm, and measured 6ft 9in in length, 2ft 6 in width. The weight of the coffin and corpse was estimated at 40 stone. The new bier was brought into requisition and found to be only just wide enough to admit the coffin being placed upon it.

1899 06 05

Royston vigilant shepherd, p2

1899 06 06

Royston inquiry, p4

1899 07 24

An action was brought by Thomas Barlow, baker of Litlington to recover £9 from a Bassingbourn butcher in respect of a breach of warranty in a horse dealing transaction. Defendant had told him the mare was quiet to ride and drive, but that on putting her in the trap she was a little bit "swishy". He drove the mare to Royston, and on starting from Joe Coote's shop it began to kick. On the way home

it had two other turns of kicking. On the following morning he took two hours in attempting to get the mare into the cart, then gave it up for a bad job

1899 09 30c

A man named Revill, residing at Odsey, was on his way to Royston, driving a pony and trap, when he observed a rough-looking individual coming towards him. The tramp turned towards the hedge, put himself in a shooting attitude and pointed what was thought to be a revolver. The man in charge of the pony laid down in the trap, and whipping up his pony drove as fast as he could to Royston. P.C. Knight was despatched on a bicycle and came across the would-be highwayman lying on the side of the road. The tramp gave a rambling account of himself and said he was a solicitor practising in Chancery Lane.

1899 10 24

Three London musicians and a comedian were charged with stealing a bag of potatoes, value 4s., from a field in Melbourn. John King, roadman, said he saw one of them jump over a hedge, get the bag and place in on a trolley. PC Knight said he saw the prisoners with a piano organ on a trolley and found the potatoes lying on the seat, covered with a rug. He detained two and took them to Royston police station. Afterwards found the others had decamped with the pony in the direction of Baldock but being a cyclist he followed them. One prisoner said they on 5 arriving at Royston fair he saw Harris' roundabouts and went and spoke to the proprietor. When there the constable questioned him. They had bought the potatoes from a man in a public house at Long Melford for 1s.6d.

1900 01 24

To the accompaniment of an outburst of patriotic sentiment three of the Volunteers attached to the Royston Company of the 1st Volunteer Battalion Beds Regiment left on Tuesday afternoon. Nearly the whole of the townspeople, including the tradesmen, turned out to wish "our citizen soldiers" God speed and good luck. The little band of Volunteers looked spick and span in their scarlet uniforms. The Royston Military Band were present and the very lively and good-tempered crowd entered heartily into the patriotic airs they played. The enthusiasm of the scene will remain long on the memory of Royston people.

1900 07 02

Death Thos Shell of Royston, p4

1900 07 26

An application was made on behalf of the Royston Horticultural Society as to police assistance at the Bank Holiday show and sports. Last year they had the assistance of an inspector and four constables. This year they were informed that the police were so much pressed on Bank Holiday that they could not be allowed to do duty in private grounds. The committee had others who would take the place of the police and they asked the Bench if they would swear them in as private constables. The chairman said they could only do so when tumults and riotous conduct was anticipated.

1900 09 07

Royston inquiry sewage, p4

1901 01 16

Royston bike theft p3

1901 01 24

Royston workhouse burning, p2

1901 05 20

The return of Privates M. Harper of Therfield and W. Sell of Royston from South Africa was the occasion of much enthusiasm. They were hardly given time to alight from the train ere they were

seized and, headed by the Royston Military Band, carried shoulder high to the Armoury amid deafening rounds of cheering and shouting by the large concourse of spectators who had assembled to greet them. Private Harper's friends met him with a conveyance and very soon he boarded the trap and drove away amidst continuous cheering.

1902 03 24

A wife told Royston court that she had gone into the Buffalo's Head at Wicker Hall and asked her husband if he were coming home. He replied that he should come when he liked. About 11 o'clock he came home and on getting indoors commenced to swear and struck her with his fists. He took two tumblers off the shelf and threw them at her. She went across the room to get a small glass mirror to throw back at him and as she was turning round he struck her in the head with a knife. She said: "You have struck me in the head, Charlie". He replied: "Serve you right". The husband said: "I did throw a brick at you after I got outside the house. But you threw a brick at me first. I did not interfere with you until you interfered with me". He was committed for trial.

1902 08 06

Popular Country Drives. The "Alexandra" and "Coronation" char-a-bancs will leave Cambridge Market Hill on Wednesday for Shelford, Newton and Whittlesford; return fare 1s. Thursday special drive to Royston, Friday Haslingfield and Saturday Earith bridge. Special Sunday drive to Whittlesford Bridge pleasure gardens. H. Buck, jobmaster, Crown Inn, Jesus Lane, Cambridge – advert

1902 12 11

The buildings of the Royston Infectious Hospital are practically completed. Situate at the extreme end of Garden Walk it enjoys splendid isolation from the town – the nearest dwelling house is a quarter of a mile away. The whole of the buildings are surrounded by a six-foot fence and every consideration has been given, not only to preventing the spread of infection, but the comfort of patients. The wards, male and female, are spacious and comfortable. There is a bathroom with a portable bath and a linen closet with ventilating shelves.

1903 01 06

At the kennels of the Puckeridge Hunt a tame fox belonging to Mr E. Barclay, the master, has lived in luxury and ease from infancy. Two months ago Reynard broke the chain with which he was fastened up at night and made good his escape. It was feared it might meet with its death when the packs were hunting but two men saw what they took to be a collie dog, called it and it stopped. They took it to Hitchin police station where the identity of its owner was discovered by the name on the collar. The fox was conveyed by train to Royston and reunited with its master

1903 01 14

Royston Fire Brigade only received one call to a fire last year, at Mr Ebbutt's in the High Street. The hose was in good condition, as were both the engines, although the wheels of the old engine were unsafe and needed repairing. In consequence of the death of Mr Matthews they were without a Captain; James Course, the foreman, should be asked to accept the post as he took a great deal of interest in the Brigade. A key should be provided and placed in a box with a glass front outside the station so as to give members of the Brigade an opportunity of gaining admission in case of a fire, instead of having to wait the arrival of the captain

1903 02 12

Mr Balding told Royston council of the dangerous state of the Royston Cave in Melbourn Street owing to the heavy traffic which is constantly passing over it. The apex of the cave was close to the traffic and there was a possibility of its giving way at any time, especially if a traction engine were passing over. Serious consequences might arise and it was a danger the council should consider at their earliest convenience. But the road is under the supervision of the County Council.

1903 05 08

A raid on motor cars was made on the Royston Road. P.S. Gilbey, stationed at Sawston, said he and P.C. Davies measured a mile on the road, compared watches and set them exactly at the same time. At 3.49 a car passed and went towards Royston. He saw P.C. Davies come out to stop the car from beside a straw stack. The time was just under three minutes. Both policemen were in plain clothes; if they had been in uniform people would not go at such an excessive speed. The magistrates were not without sympathy for the motorist but there was proof that the limit of 12 miles per hour had been exceeded. They imposed the smallest possible fine of 5s.

1903 05 11

Royston storm, p4

1903 05 13

Royston dilapidated houses, p4

1903 07 03

Royston walking race, p3

1903 11 05

Royston passive resisters, p3

1903 11 10

The first sale of good distrained under warrants for refusing to pay the education rate took place at Royston police station. A number of constables were in attendance but there was a complete absence of interruption, the crowd of sympathisers, which numbered about 100, being very orderly. The goods which were seized from people in Nuthampstead, Reed and Barkway were all brought back. Afterwards a meeting heard that the ranks of resisters were multiplying day by day and it is more than probable that future sales will be necessary. They did not blame the police for doing their unpleasant duty in carrying out this iniquitous act; as soon as they got an opportunity they would turn out the present Government.

1904 04 23

The inhabitants of Royston had a little excitement on Wednesday evening and now have a joke good enough to last for some time. Someone noticed in the sky a reflection of what appeared to be a big fire in the direction of Fowlmere. Quickly the news spread and the firemen made all preparations and waited for the call. The glare was so great that many people walked into Royston expecting to see a large conflagration and a number of town residents journeyed to Fowlmere on bicycles and traps only to find it was caused by the burning of a heap of rubbish on Mr Beldam John's Farm

1904 07 21

Royston passive resisters, p3

1904 08 10

Royston town council was told some ten or twelve persons had purchased land in Green Street and it was only fair to them to have a good road. At the same time lighting should be provided and the Gas Company instructed to lay on the necessary services. But the Tradesmen's Club objected. They were the largest owners of land in the street. The houses had neither gas nor water, just the sewer and it would be better to wait until the mains had been laid. In the event of more building the road would have to be opened to connect these services and leave scars on the surface

1904 09 14

There was a larger attendance than usual at Royston court on account of the Passive Resisters' claims. The case of Charles Whyatt, a member of the Urban District Council, was taken first as a test case. He said the passing of the Education Act has been a source of great offence to some Nonconformists who had determined to resist its operation by every means in their power. Passive Resisters had been

formed in very part of the country and at Royston they felt it was their duty to deduct a portion of the rate that had been levied for educational purposes. One of the overseers had said he would have nothing to do with collecting the money but the auditor had threatened to surcharge him with the amount not collected.

1904 10 22

A covey of five partridges flew into the yard of the Crown Hotel, Royston, where four of them were promptly caught. It is not unusual for a stray bird to wander into town but a covey rarely leave the open country. The birds may have been frightened by a shooting party or impelled by hunger and attracted by the straw in the stable yard. They formed a welcome addition to the table of the hotel

1904 12 13

Newmarket council considered the rights of the public to exercise horses on the Severalls. A most respectable gentleman had been told to take his horse off and not go again. From time immemorial it had been used for all kinds of purposes: fairs, cricketing and even carpet-shaking; when the Americans were here they were allowed to gallop their horses on it. The Jockey Club had hired the land but the public had the right of exercising horses on it. If people were stopped they would go to Royston to train their horses and trade would be driven from the town.

1905 01 11

Royston fire, p3

1905 01 19

Royston passive resisters, p3

1905 02 09

Royston poor law, p2

1905 02 14

On Saturday a caravan containing two families of the Macedonian gypsies passed through Royston escorted by two constables, but some of the women managed to do some shopping. As their pony was obviously unfit for the hills on the Buntingford Road they camped for the night near Ashwell Station where a policeman kept supervision over them. They pretended to know little English beyond the words 'shilling' but suddenly developed a knowledge of English sufficient to bargain for hay. There were two families with nine children, unkempt and dirty. Mr Clark, an enterprising photographer, endeavoured to take a photograph but they declined to group themselves till they had received money. A tremendous number of post card pictures of the group have been sold. They are apparently one of the two vans which disappeared and were practically forgotten when the others were deported last week. 05 02 14

1905 06 28

The sale of the contents of Brooklands, the residence of the late E.B. Nunn at Royston, featured a collection of objects that were formerly exhibited in the Royston museum. They included a fine funereal urn found in excavations on the Heath in 1854 which was sold to Baron von Hugel. A Roman brick bearing figures of soldiers, found in a garden at Kneesworth, fetched 20s, a large spearhead made over £4 while old muzzle-loading guns fetched only a shilling each. A collection of 70 17th-century tradesmen's tokens were sold for £7 05 06 28

1905 12 19

A Royston meeting considered forming an athletic association and erecting a building to serve as a drill hall, gymnasium and swimming bath. Lord Roberts was proposing that every boy in every public school should be instructed to shoot with the rifle, young men should stretch their limbs and learn the noble art of self-defence and singlesticks and every boy and girl should learn to swim. If they wanted such a place and put their backs into it then they could do it. 05 12 19a&b

1906 02 21

Royston shop fire, p3

1906 02 28

The Vicar of Royston claimed five shillings from the International Tea Company as a tithe on their premises in the High Street. An Act of Charles II specified houses that should pay, but this was no longer occupied as a dwelling-house. However Joseph Archer had it as a saddler's shop until the International took it, and he'd paid the tithe. Dovecotes and warehouses were also rateable. 06 02 28a & b

1906 03 10

At Shepreth a path runs diagonally across the football pitch and when a lady is passing the game ceases; players no longer rush madly after a football as the vision of beauty passes on her way. But in Royston 22 men were held up by a bulldog who followed the ball to the six-yard line where he stood with his nose glued to the leather sphere. The goalie refused to kick off with the dog so close while the spectators laughed. Presently a fashionable steeplechase jockey carried it off by its collar 06 03 10b

1906 03 15

A couple from Barkway Road, Royston were charged with neglecting their children. They were very badly clad, with old ragged shirts that were blackened and filthy and vermin running all over their bodies. The house appeared very dirty: there was an iron bedstead with very little bedding where the four children slept. The wife had been laid up with influenza, otherwise she would have bathed the children; the husband earned 15 shillings a week and there were eight in the family. 06 03 15a

1906 04 10

A report on the health of Royston reveals four cases of scarlet fever, five cases of diphtheria and two of typhoid occurred last year but there have been no deaths from diarrhoea since 1899. Several dilapidated or insanitary cottages were repaired or improved, 21 houses erected and 15 connected with the sewer. A fish-frying establishment on Fish Hall had been the subject of complaint but measured had been taken to raise the chimney 06 04 10c

1906 04 27

Royston tithes, p2

1906 08 08

Royston show, p4

1906 08 14

Royston cross, p4 *

1907 01 17

Women's suffrage – meeting at Royston – 07 01 17b

1907 02 14

Royston Industrial Co-operative Society is to be wound up. When it started a few years ago, business was exceedingly brisk but recently several large firms have established branches in the town which have handicapped the Co-operative Stores considerably. To continue would be to sink into greater financial difficulty. 07 02 14

1907 03 01

A stag chased by the Cambridge Drag Hounds jumped into the garden of a house in Gower Road, Royston, then plunged through the window into the parlour. Two young ladies were terribly frightened as the animal dashed round, breaking chairs, pictures and mirrors until huntsmen secured it. Meanwhile the hounds entered the kitchen and devoured the whole of the family's dinner. The

huntsmen continue their sport after leaving an address to which the owner should write for compensation. 07 03 01

1907 11 21

A Royston man describes his experiences in America: my health gave way and I found myself utterly destitute. Desirous of getting home again I went round the wharves until I secured the position of a "cattleman's stiff". We had 460 head on board – very dangerous work as these wild-cattle get very nasty on the long journey. During a storm the whole deck cargo of live stock was washed away. After 17 days of severe hardship we finally docked at Liverpool. I was back in the old country – a poorer, sadder, but I trust wiser man. - 07 10 07 & a Royston 'Old Palace' to be sold – 07 11 21

1908 03 28

Licensing bill debated Royston & Cambridge – 08 03 28 & b

1908 11 13

For several hours the district between Lord's Bridge and Haslingfield was the scene of warfare which, had it been real, would have strewn the countryside with dead and dying. The C.U. Officers' Training Corps was joined by the Leys, Perse, Cambridge County and other schools as several hundreds of troops, cavalry, infantry and engineers were engaged. The idea was that a hostile army was retiring towards Royston and being harried by the home army. Their retreat was attended with difficulty since all the bridges over the Cam were destroyed and fords existed for mounted troops only. CWN 08 11 13 p5

1908 12 11

Royston drapers, Whitaker, failure – 08 12 11

1909 08 06

The most serious fire known in Royston for the last 30 years completely gutted Phillip's brewery in Baldock Street. Only recently the most modern plant was installed, today the ruins present a doleful spectacle. The brewery offices face the road and adjoining them is Brewery House occupied by Mr W.J. Abbott, upholsterer. He had died on Tuesday and his body lay in the house all the time. Nearby are premises of Warren Bros, printers and stationers which was also threatened. CWN 09 08 06

1910 09 09

Disgraceful scenes occurred during an open air meeting held by the Royston Independent Labour Party. Two of the speakers were listened to quietly but the third was interrupted by some youths who, finding that yelling failed to stop him, resorted to egg throwing. The missile however failed to reach the intended mark, hitting instead a spectator full in the ear, covering both him and his brother with the contents. At the conclusion of the meeting the promoters gathered up all the literature to stop it falling into the hands of the opposition 10 09 09f

1910 10 07

An interesting personality passed away. Mrs Sarah Faircloth (98) was born at Royston three years before the Battle of Waterloo. She was the granddaughter of Henry Andrews, Astronomical Calculator to the Board of Longitude and the originator of the celebrated Old Moore's Almanack. In 1903 she sent his portrait to the Queen and Cambridge Free Library and received a gratifying acknowledgment from each. She was fond of reading and recently played a game of cribbage with her only surviving son. 10 10 07b

1911 05 26

The appearance of four young gentlemen with their golf clubs on the Royston Links was the cause of some excitement. There were a good number of people present who hindered them saying Sunday golf was not allowed. The game started without incident but at the third green spectators sat around the hole and refused to move. The golfers retired defeated. More demonstrations of the same kind are expected. 11 05 26

1912 08 30

Floods Swavesey, Cottenham, Royston, Melbourn, Arrington, Histon, St Ives – 12 08 30h

1912 09 13

Military operations – 12 09 13i & j & l training near Fen Ditton, Airship camp, John French visit, cavalry at Royston – 12 09 13h; photos arrival Liverpool Territorials at station, camp at Linton – 12 09 13m; air scouts, Col Cody biplane photo – 12 09 20

1913 05 09

Royston pauper's coffins

1913 05 16

Remaking Royston - Newmarket Rd

1913 04 23

Royston badgers

1914 03 13

Urban Council Elections. Owing to the resignation of the chairman, Mr. D. B. Balding, one of the first members elected to the Council in 1897 there will be five vacancies on the Royston Urban District Council this year. The members retiring in the ordinary course of things are Messrs. J. R. Booth, Simon Camps, P. Goodman (vice-chairman.) and W. C. Titchmarsh. These four will seek re-election and there is likely to be a contest owing to the Independent Labour Party having announced their intention of running two or three candidates. 1914 03 13 CIPof

1914 04 24

Motor Bus Service. — On Wednesday a motor bus service between Cambridge and Royston was commenced. At present the buses are making three journeys each way, calling at the intermediate villages. 14 04 24 CIPof

1914 05 08

The court heard that the head teacher of the North Hall School, near Royston had slapped a child's hand with her own hand for using improper language. There was no question of a cane, as there was no cane in the school. The eight-year old boy went home and told his mother. Next morning she'd come to the school and struck the teacher violently with her fist, striking twelve blows while in the lobby and ten more in the yard. Magistrates decided not to imprison her but imposed a sovereign fine. 14 05 08g

1914 05 29

Death of Well-known Farmer. Mr. James Russell, late of Road Farm, Wendy, passed away suddenly on Thursday last at his residence, St. Swithin, Royston. Mr. Russell was born at Road Farm, Wendy, 80 years ago, the farm having been in the hands of the Russell family since the year 1700, when his grandfather migrated there from Litlington. Owing to age and failing health, Mr. Russell retired seven years ago, and went to live at Royston. He was well-known throughout the country as a rearer of fat stock, and used to show at Birmingham, Islington and other shows throughout the country. The funeral took place at Royston on Monday – 14 05 29 CIPof

1914 06 19

Information was received early on Sunday morning that suffragettes were approaching Royston by motor car so police attended both services in the parish church, the doors being locked when the service began. Police were also present in neighbouring village churches but no suffragettes appeared, though a rumour circulated that suspicious looking women were seen in the early hours. At Barkway a parcel was found in the church. PC Cross took it into the churchyard but it was found to contain nothing dangerous. 14 06 19 p7

1914 09 04

Recruiting Royston, Shelford, Bourn, Wicken, Soham, Gamlingay

1914 10 09

Specials:—The special constables sworn in at Royston, numbering 50, commenced duties on Tuesday. Four men are on duty each night from 9 a.m. till midnight. Yesterday (Thursday) evening all the specials paraded at the Drill Hall for inspection and instructions by Superintendent Reed.

1914 10 16

Belgian Refugees at Royston. By the generosity of the townspeople, a house on the Old North Road has been furnished and provision made for the reception of Belgian refugees. The first contingent arrived on Saturday and were met by the Chairman of the District Council and others. The family now in residence consists of a father with his two sons, a daughter and a daughter-in-law. They had a large butcher's business in Malines, and have left everything they possessed. Two more families are expected to arrive shortly. There are also two families from Antwerp, who are guests of ladies and gentlemen in the town.

1914 11 06

Buried under fall of chalk. An inquest was held on Monday on the body of a man named George Reed, 34 years of age, who was killed on Thursday whilst at work in a chalk pit at Royston. Deceased was spiking chalk, and suddenly a large piece, weighing some 15 cwts, fell from above, hitting the man on the head and knocking him down. A further fall of 30 to 40 tons took place, and buried the man, who, when extricated, was quite dead, with fearful injuries to his head. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

1916 08 30

New Catholic Church at Royston. Between 400 and 500 people attended the ceremony on Saturday of the blessing of the foundation stone of the new Catholic Church at Royston, which is being erected on the Melbourn Road. The ceremony was an interesting and impressive one and one that has not been witnessed since the 12th century, about which time the Priory Church was built. The new church, which is cruciform in design, is being built in the Renaissance style and is situate in the Park Paddock, on the Melbourn Road. The Park House and grounds and the adjoining house and residence have been acquired and are being adapted as a convent. The Sisters of Providence, who have been in the town about four years, use the Park House as an educational establishment and another Close Order of Sisters will be in the house in the adjoining grounds. The ceremony of the blessing of the stone was performed in brilliant weather by Cardinal Bourne.

1917 09 12

Capt Harold Ackroyd of Royston, who died in action, awarded Victoria Cross – 17 09 12b

1920 08 25

Haystacks Burnt. As the result of a fire on the Old North Road, Royston two stacks belonging to Mr Haywood, and containing about 65 to 70 tons, the produce of 20 acres, were destroyed. The Royston Fire Brigade received a call, but the supply of water was very poor and practically useless for any effective purpose. In the adjoining field, and only a few yards away from the fire, there were shocks of corn standing, belonging to Mr. Andrew Pigg, and by the work of many willing helpers these were removed to a safer distance and watch kept to see that they did not catch fire, as lumps of burning hay were carried into the field by the wind. The fire is said to have been caused by two very little boys playing with matches near the stacks.

1924 01 10

Royston engineers failure, p4 *

1924 05 11c

Coming! Broncho Bill's Wild West exhibition and mammoth circus. Broncho Bill's world famous elephants. Broncho Bill's new group of performing prairie horses and 20 other big acts. Monday next, Midsummer Common, Cambridge. The great show will also visit Royston and Huntingdon - Advert

1924 08 23c

Much interest centred in the band concert and sports meeting held on the Vinery Road Recreation Ground, Romsey Town, Cambridge. The band contest attracted five entries – March Railway Silver Prize Band, Manca Silver Prize Band, Royston Town S.P.B., Soham Comrades' S.P.B. and Letchworth Town S.P.B. There were two contests, a march selection, won by Royston, and a test piece when only four points separated the last three bands, the winners being Soham.

1926 01 18

Skating has been in full swing over the weekend. The Cambridge Sewage Farm has been the rendezvous of the majority of skaters and on Sunday over 500 skaters were 'on' in the afternoon. Mr Nicholls' field in Grantchester Meadows was flooded and many skaters availed themselves of the opportunity it offered, whilst others went over to Swavesey. Hundreds indulged in winter sports on the slopes of Royston Heath, tobogganing and ski-ing were general

1926 03 25

Damage to the amount of about £3,000 was done by a fire at a large granary in the station yard at Royston. It was very difficult to get a sufficient pressure of water and the whole of the vast storehouse was soon in flames. A railway elevated siding became involved, the metal rails twisted into grotesque shapes by the great heat. Nearby were some petrol tanks belonging to the Anglo American Oil Company; a band of volunteers secured the cans of petrol and deposited them in some gardens at a safe distance from the fire

1926 05 26

A journey to London and back in an invalid chair is something of an achievement. This is how Mr H.D. Davies, son of Dr Davis of Histon, spent the Whitsun holiday. Starting from home at 10.30 am Sunday, he reached London at 7.30 pm having stopped at Royston en route for dinner. Early next morning he had a run into the city. He returned to Cambridge safely at 8.30. Mr Davis has ridden in his chair for two years or more but had never been faster than Saffron Walden before. His chair was "the ordinary standard pattern" and he could travel at a rate of ten miles an hour, "But of course I have to go slow uphill", he added.

1927 03 18

An exceptionally well-attended meeting of Royston ex-Service men enthusiastically agreed to form a branch of the British Legion. The election of officers took place including President Lieut-Col E. Phillips, chairman Lieut-Col Danyon, secretary H.G. Harris and committee members E. Bonnett, A. Woods, H. Mowberry, C. Wilkin & W. Blows

1928 05 18

Scenes of unprecedented excitement marked the arrival of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales at Royston. From an early hour the streets were packed with eager and excited crowds, despite rain and hail falling heavily, and every house and shop was gaily bedecked with flags. The guests' reserved stand was packed to capacity and the meadow behind was one mass of people. A roar of cheering went up as the Prince arrived to open the new children's ward at the Royston and District Hospital. Later he travelled to Papworth Village Settlement and opened the new Village Hall and Memorial Cottages

1928 09 05

Money is often 'cached' outside the workhouse, the tramps burying the coins in the sides of some bank, below tree roots or behind loose wall stones. Another means of concealment is to embed some small coins in the pieces of soap "Weary Willie" generally carry; but a casual ward official has

adopted the practice of probing every piece of soap with a hat pin and often comes across hidden treasure. Coins are also concealed in the mouth and an old tramp 'Long Amos' bemoans to this day the accidental swallowing of a sixpence while taking a bath in Royston 'spike'

1928 12 19

Lady Glanely, of Exning House, was saved from almost certain death when her car overturned and burst into flames near Royston. She was accompanied by her maid and the chauffeur was driving when the car came into collision with a cyclist, skidded and overturned. Within a few minutes the car was a mass of flames and she was trapped inside, unable to open the door. A man who was passing immediately rushed up and fought like a madman and managed to drag Lady Glanely out of the debris to safety. He rescued also the maid and assisted the chauffeur who had been unable to free himself. But for this man's brave intervention nothing could have saved her ladyship. A motor scout who was in the vicinity did his best to quell the flames, but in vain; the car was completely burnt and all her ladyship's luggage and her jewels, which were of great value, were lost.

1930 02 17

Mr Chris Waller of Bassingbourn, one of the most famous trainers and riders 'over the sticks' of his day, has died as the result of a collision between his four-wheeled American buggy and a motor car. He successfully trained and owned many horses in the course of a long association with the Turf. He steered Jolly Sir John in Old Joe's Grand National of 1886 and Aladdin in 1888. As a trainer he commenced at Welwyn and migrated to Royston whence he went to Stockbridge to manage Major Joicey's stud farm. 30 02 17a

1931 02 20

The four children of Sir Cecil and Lady Neuman had a narrow escape from death when Burloes, their beautiful country residence just outside Royston, was entirely destroyed by fire. The head nurse, Miss Curry, roused the household and got the children to safety by means of a canvas fire escape chute from the night nursery. The mansion, which was build 28 years ago, stood in a commanding position on a hill and firemen were hampered by a lack of water. "Everything has gone, but the staff behaved simply splendidly", said her Ladyship. 31 02 20f & g & h

1931 08 21

A.J. Willmott of Royston has retired after serving 42 years with the Post Office. He used to travel for many years between Bassingbourn and Guilden Morden, driving a horse and cart, but lost his heart to a Royston lady and had been there ever since. He did his duties in a praiseworthy manner and always carried a smiling face. But he had not enjoyed good health and was moving to Westcliff into a house electrically fitted; he was presented with an electric kettle and a reading lamp by his colleagues. 31 08 21a

1931 09 25

Over 350 acres of land on the immediate outskirts of Royston, together with numerous cottages were offered for sale. The auctioneer said, "In a few years' time many people will be wondering why they did not buy land at the bargain prices it can be purchased today". But none of the lots reached their reserve: Flint Hall Farm with 195 acres was withdrawn at £1,750, Grange Farm with 131 acres at £1,200 at Northfield Cottage, 28 Melbourn Road failed to reach £300. 31 09 25e

1931 11 20

The garage, containing two cars belonging to Mr P.H. Grundy of Royston was destroyed by fire. The wind blew the flames on to the chauffeur's cottage but all his furniture was removed to safety. Duxford RAF fire brigade offered their services and had the wind not changed their 50-gallon tanks of chemicals would have been vitally necessary, owing to the lack of water. 31 11 20a

1932 05 13

Importers have been supplying eggs in large bulk to the wholesalers, providing continuous, dependable supplies to the retailer. Now the opening of the Royston packing station has improved the

size and quality of home-produced eggs. The National Mark Egg Scheme has steadied prices; it is the best hope of retaining existing markets and may increase consumption. 32 05 13

1932 05 17

Royston Town Hall reopened after being altered at a cost of £2,500, with a three-day programme of entertainments. Melbourn Players performed on the first night – but attracted only a small crowd. 200 attended a ball on the Friday – as this was the first dance on the floor it was not as good as it might be, but will improve in time – and a variety entertainment by amateur London artistes on Saturday seemed to the liking of everyone. 32 05 17

1933 02 10

Royston museum of Bunyan tools – 33 02 10

1933 06 13

Royston Cinema, owned by Mr J.N. Cox, was practically burnt out by a fire which threatened a nearby house. So fierce was the fire that within 15 minutes the whole of the roof crashed, to be followed by the right-hand wall. This fell on to a greenhouse in the garden of Mr E. Henderson, who was ill in bed and the flames charred the wood under his roof. The cinema auditorium was destroyed but the valuable projection apparatus and gas-engine was saved, as were most of the reels of film. 33 06 13b, 33 06 14a (pic)

1933 07 20

Plans for the new Royston cinema in Priory Lane met with opposition: it is deplorable thing it is being built there; it has absolutely crabbed the whole of the building of good-class houses in the future. Tradesmen thought it the most calamitous things which could ever have happened, councillors were told. 33 07 20

1933 07 22

Royston theatre – 33 07 22

1934 04 11

Mr H.R. Maunders, the lay reader at Litlington, reports that he was returning from a vestry meeting at Abington Pigotts when he was amazed to see by the light of his cycle lamp, a young woman standing a few yards from him. She was wearing a costume of 100 years ago and he eyes pierced the night like balls of fire. Mr E. Hallybone, the well-known dirt-track rider from Royston, says he had stopped one night with magneto trouble when he saw something white coming towards him and ran. But the vicar says it is a large white owl and he sees it every night. 34 04 11

1934 06 07

The prompt action of three employees of Messrs S. Wilkerson, corn merchants of Royston, averted a blaze which would have been one of the biggest ever seen in the town. They saw flames and smoke issuing from one of the wooden ventilators in the centre of the granary roof, entered the building and attacked the flames with minimax extinguishers. The granary is a large wooden building and it would have been impossible to stop the fire had it gained a firmer hold. 34 06 07

1935 02 22

Royston Gas Company has had a successful year's trading. They had opened a new showroom in the High Street giving greater facilities for the display of lighting, cooking and heating appliances and installed 77 cookers, 23 gas fires and 18 geysers, coppers and radiators for clients. But they lost the contract for street lighting although their tender was substantially less than that for electric lighting. They had no records of the formation of the Company but had a notice sent out in 1836 so knew they were about 100 years old. 35 02 22f & g

1935 05 27

A large paraffin drum exploded during a blaze at Royston Brewery sending a sheet of flame into the sky like a long comet and causing more damage than the fire. The top of the drum knocked the troughing off the brewery building while the main body of the drum was hurled against the back wall of Mr F.J. Middleton's house with such force that the brickwork was knocked back half an inch. It then rebounded rebounding into the middle of his greenhouse. The thick steel 50-gallon oil drum was nearly empty before the fire. 35 05 27a

1935 07 02

Royston paddling pool started – 35 07 02b

1935 08 08

There were ten back-to-back houses in London Road and The Warren, Royston. The living room was practically underground, there was no through ventilation, sanitary accommodation and water supply were inadequate and they were in a bad state of disrepair. A large amount would have to be spent to make them fit for human habitation and they should be demolished. But there were no vacant houses to which the tenants could go and they were quite content where they were, an Inquiry was told. 35 08 08

1939 09 23

On Saturday night the village of Barkway was aroused by cries of 'Fire!' Flames had been seen shooting through the roof of The Elms, an eight-roomed house. Adjoining, under a continuous roof is The Gables with a carpenter's and paint shop to which the blaze spread. It is an Elizabethan building and was the Corn Exchange when the market was transferred from Barkway to Royston. Every room is panelled with inflammable pitch pine and there is a very valuable oak staircase. Both buildings were saved. 35 09 23b

1936 03 24

Ellis Wilkerson of Manor Farm, Barley founded the business of Messrs Samuel Wilkerson & Son, corn merchants, at Bassingbourn 73 years ago, moving to Royston in 1876. He farmed 800 acres, taking a great interest in his sheep, and was a director of the Royston Farmers' Manure Company. He was also a fine judge of barley being a buyer for Mess Bass, Ratcliffe and Gretton of Burton-on-Trent. 36 03 24

1936 11 24

An elderly man lost his life in a blaze which completely destroyed three thatched cottages at Orwell in the early hours of the morning. Neighbour Harry Freestone got his own family out and then threw buckets of water on the flames. But the thatch caught fire and he had to leave. Royston and Cambridge brigades arrived just in time to save the Post Office although the Royston pump broke down. The cottages were burnt to the ground, only the chimney stacks being left standing. Deceased always slept downstairs in front of the fire and tied himself to the bed so that he should not roll over into it. 36 11 24a

1936 12 03

Clara Harris, the grand old lady of showland, celebrated her 100th birthday in her caravan at Haslingfield. She was the daughter of a showman, Larry Shaw, who was the first steam roundabout proprietor. In 1869 she married Moe Harris of Gamlingay and assisted him at fairgrounds around England. Clara worked until she was 93; the last fair was at Royston where she sat behind her stall selling sweets she'd made herself. Two of her five daughters carry on the tradition. 36 12 03b

1937 02 19

Work has started on the destruction of houses condemned under Royston Council's slum clearance orders. One of the first to go is the old Well House in Melbourn Street, in spite of the efforts of Mr E.W. Thair to get it preserved. The building had belonged to the Beldams, whose vault lies in the churchyard 37 02 19

1937 08 11

Royston public library has 1,120 readers but all they can offer is one evening a week with the books displayed in 22 heavy transport boxes placed on school desks in a classroom. These have to be replaced in a corner of the room at the close of the library. In spite of these adverse conditions it is greatly used and appreciated. The UDC has power to raise a library rate to provide a room. This would allow more books, extended opening and better conditions. As a quarter of the population use the library it merited careful consideration, councillors were urged 37 08 11

1938 04 28

Royston cattle market is finished, it would be better if the pens were cleared away tomorrow and the Market House done away with so the space could be converted into a parking place for cars, Royston Council was told. But James Hargreaves objected to the proposed Market Hill Compulsory Purchase Order. He owned the market rights and was entitled to also receive tolls payable at the annual fair. The proposal would seriously affect the amenities of the market, the fair and the rights of stallage, he claimed. 38 04 28

1938 05 20

A most spectacular crash occurred at Royston Cross when a six-wheeled lorry laden with five tons of cardboard was struck by another six-wheeler carrying 14 tons of bricks. It was only by a miracle that the drivers escaped death. The wooden bodywork of one lorry was broken in half by the impact and the front of the other was completely smashed in. The force of the crash drove one into the front of Beale's Corner Café. Had it not been for the steel posts on either side of the doorway – erected as a result of previous accidents – a great deal more damage would have been done 38 05 20

1938 06 24

The new automatic telephone exchange for Royston came into use for the first time. Strings were attached to the fuses at the old exchange and at the arranged time these were all pulled out. Immediately afterwards a similar operation took place at the new exchange and the change-over to automatic telephoning had been effected in less than 60 seconds. This means users will be able to dial nearly 5,000 telephone numbers without the aid of an operator. The charges will be registered automatically on the calling subscriber's individual meter. 38 06 24

1938 09 05

Meldreth church was packed when Capt H.O.S. Ellis an 82-year-old barrister, was married to a lady 30 years his junior. The bride had planned a private wedding, but the parishioners altered all that. A continual dream came on foot, by cycle and even in bath-chairs until the whole of the path to the church was lined four or more deep. The ceremony over the couple faced a crowd armed with confetti, rice and cameras and some force had to be used to clear the way for the CDN photographer. They left by car for the Corner Café, Royston and their wedding feast. The groom has spent all his life in the village, is a councillor and was leader of the recent school strike. He first met his bride about six weeks ago. 38 09 05 & a

1938 11 12

Robert Clark, the Royston photographer, literally takes a camera to bed with him so he can dash out after pictures of accidents at Royston cross, near his home. He has photographed 60 smashes at the spot during the past two years. 38 11 12a

1939 01 05

Royston residents who don't go to church are invited to the Priory Cinema Services on Sunday evenings. They will be entirely undenominational where speakers will choose their own subjects. They will not deal with prophecies or propound theories, just bring facts before people. It is not a stunt and they are not trying to compete with the churches. There are many people who don't go to church because they don't like the parson or because it's cold. Meetings will be held for the next four Sundays and last about an hour. 39 01 05

1939 01 11

Royston's hill-sides may soon be riddled with tunnels. The idea to provide permanent A.R.P. shelters would be better than completing the half-dig trenches on The Warren which, at best, would be only splinter proof, councillors say. These were intended for people who had no gardens in which they could construct their own shelters and those away from their houses during an air raid. But the hills were a long way from where the main part of the population live and people could not be forced to go into them 39 01 11c

1939 02 14

Royston evacuation scheme – 39 02 14

1939 03 15

Royston council's decision not to allow part of the Priory Estate to be used for shops, a garage filling station and showroom has been upheld by an Inspector. It was zoned for residential purposes and is unnecessary for local needs. The owners of the land had offered it to the council to be preserved as an open space, since development would mean the clearance of the trees. But there were a great many principles and a certain amount of money involved so it should be discussed by the full council 39 03 15

1939 03 16

Royston Council's old manual fire engine is a venerable relic but retains its 'Directions for Use'. "Put as many men at the handles as can stand both inside and out and move the handles quickly from top to bottom", it says. "Should an obstruction of the water appear ... it should be immediately stopped to allow the rubbish to be cleaned away ... On return from a fire it is advisable to pump clean water through the engine and remove mud ... that may have been drawn into the works", But in one of the pipes we discovered the mortal remains of a rat. The engine was given to the town by Henry Fordham and was only used for in-town fires. Now it may be sold. 39 03 16 & a

1939 06 28

Sir - The War Office states that no permanent military camp is being contemplated on Royston Heath. I saw the Heath a week ago. Near the road were a number of substantial hutments and tents which look to a war-time soldier very much like dwellings of an advance party. But the rape of common land would make even the War Office careful. The agents of a foreign power can see that the hutments are there and they seem to be occupied by the Royal Engineers. If that information is any importance to a possible enemy why allow newspapers to publish it – H.A. Baker. The camp is headquarters for the anti-aircraft searchlight units around Royston. The period for which the searchlights are to be maintained is not officially stated – Ed. 39 06 28b

1937 07 12

Royston's A.R.P. control centre is totally unsuitable for the job and in the wrong place, councillors say. They don't know how many hundreds of pounds it will cost or even if it is bomb-proof. The Home Office were pressing for the building to be in concrete but the one they have is more of a glorified chicken-house and should be scrapped. But it will only come into use in case of an actual air raid and might only be occupied for an hour. 37 07 12

1939 08 16

Royston council heard that A.R.P. trenches at the Warren and Melbourn Street together with the control centre at the Town Hall will cost £720. Walter Hart, William Palmer and George Starr were appointed as Auxiliary firemen and extra uniforms would be obtained while 17 others have been trained and would receive a one-pound bonus. Supplies of respirators for small children and protective helmets for babies will shortly be available but must not be issued until necessity arose. 39 08 16a

1939 09 13

Anti-gas protective helmets for babies are being produced but for moment youngsters (not babies) can use ordinary respirators, Royston council told 39 09 13a

1940 01 10

Services Club at old Post Office, Melbourn Street, Royston opened – 40 01 10b

1940 02 15

Evacuees' exodus – half have gone from Royston – 40 02 15d

1940 02 21

Royston fire brigade reminiscences 50 years by R.A. Shildrick – 40 02 21b

1940 02 23

Royston black-out offender – took down curtain to act as towel – 40 02 23b

1940 03 13

Royston – more ARP shelters – 40 03 13e

1940 02 02

Carnival Queen Weds. — Miss Joan S. Brissenden, Royston's Carnival Queen for the Coronation, Day celebrations of 1937, was married on Saturday to Mr. John Stanley Cosford of 75 Melbourn Road, Royston. Miss Brissenden, who lives at 45 Green Street, Royston, is the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Brissenden, of 28 Rowley Road, Carshalton, Surrey. The wedding took place at Hitchin Register Office.

1940 07 05

Stacks Destroyed.—A large haystack and part of a stack of straw on the farm of Mr. W. Pepper, Melbourn Heath, were completely destroyed by fire on Saturday. Royston Fire Brigade received a call about 3.30 p.m., and under the direction of Second Officer Carter, rendered every assistance. Owing to the absence of a water supply, it was found necessary to pull the stack to pieces and burn it out. Chief Officer Witts took charge of the evening operations. The fire necessitated the attendance of the brigade until the early hours of Sunday morning. The stack had been thatched on the Friday, the day before the outbreak.

1940 11 08

Messerschmitt on View. — A German Messerschmitt 108 arrived at Royston on Tuesday and was on view at a nominal charge in aid of the local Spitfire Fund. The machine was brought down in England some time ago. It was in charge of a local committee, and placed at the rear of the Town Hall. A substantial sum was paid by onlookers.

1941 04 25

Minister as Chaplain. The Rev. A. Manley, who has been resident minister at Royston Methodist Church for the last four years, has joined the R.A.F. as a chaplain, and he will leave Royston in the course of next week. Preaching his farewell sermon on Sunday evening, Mr. Manley said he was sorry to leave Royston for many reasons, one of which was because there had always been a friendship between the members of the church in the town and district and himself. At the close of the service, Mr. John Oliver, the society steward, on behalf of the church, presented Mr. Manley with a wristlet watch, and expressed the hope that he would have a successful and safe ministry with the R.A.F.

1941 07 11

Cottage fire. Prompt action by a young man named Francis Blows with a garden hosepipe saved serious damage to a cottage in Mackerel Hall (Royston), the eaves of which had caught light through

a spark from a copper flue. The Royston Fire Brigade received a call on Tuesday afternoon and the fire was soon out. The tenant of the cottage is Mrs Bogier.

1941 07 18

Loss to Royston Methodism. A prominent figure in the life of Royston and Methodism in particular has been removed by the death on Friday, of Mr. William Henry Tobyn, of Clovelly, Old North Road, at the age of 71 years. Coming to Royston 22 years ago from Biggleswade, where he was born, Mr. Tobyn went into business with Mr. Wright as drapers and outfitters in Market Hill, and the firm of Messrs Wright and Tobyn became known for miles around. He retired about ten years ago. It was said of Mr. Tobyn that he lived for Methodism and the Methodist Church, and the Methodist Church and Sunday School owed much to his help.

1941 08 01

New Headmaster. It is announced that Mr. John Henry Tucker, formerly Headmaster of Baldock Church School, now closed, will succeed Mr. L. S. Stuart as Headmaster of the Royston Church Day School.

1941 09 12

Double Wedding at Royston. For the first time for over half a century, a double wedding was solemnised at the Royston Parish Church on Saturday, the brides being two sisters. The senior couple were Driver Victor H. Cotton, of the Hampshire Regiment, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Cotton, of Rockbourne, Millbrook, Southampton, and Miss Elsie M. Robinson, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Robinson, of 20 Lankester Road, Royston. The other couple were Lance-Corporal G. E. Vaughan, of the Hampshire Regiment, second son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Vaughan, of 169, Manor Road, Itchen, Southampton, and Miss Edna Jean Robinson, of 20 Lankester Road Royston, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. Robinson. At the conclusion of the double ceremony, a reception was held at the Corner Cafe, at which about 50 guests were present.

1941 11 28

Grand National Memories. The sale of the contents of the residence at Warren Close, Royston, yesterday (Thursday) by Messrs. Nash. Son and Rowley, brought together a big company of buyers, and high prices were obtained for many of the lots. The items associated with the famous steeplechaser. Golden Miller, came in for a large amount of attention, and we understand the bronze statue of the horse fetched £10, and the oil painting, by Earl, £69; an additional painting of Insurance, also by Earl, realised £55, and the Trainer's Cup presented for the Grand National victory of 1934 was knocked down for £75. The purchaser in each case was Mr. Mortimer, of Darlington, a former resident of Royston.

1942 01 02

Death of Mr H.B. Hart. Cambs Cricket Club lost a valuable old servant and one of its most active members by the death of Mr Harold B. Hart, of Manor Farm Hauxton. Mr. Hart, who died on Monday at the age of 54, had been in failing health for some time. He first played cricket for Cambs in 1913, and continued till 1935. Elected joint secretary in 1920, he was also appointed captain in 1927 and for some seasons combined these offices. He worked exceptionally hard in the lean period following the resumption of cricket after the last war, and had the satisfaction of seeing these energetic efforts rewarded by the building up of a useful side. A fine batsman in his younger days, he also played for Camden and Royston. He was also associated for many years with Royston Town Football Club of which he was captain, and earned a big reputation as a centre-half. Mr Hart had been at Manor Farm for about three years. Before that he lived for 19 years at Harston, where he was bailiff to the late Sir Charles Walston

1942 01 23

Escape at Second Attempt. In September, 1940, we reported that Gunner E. Dimes, an old Duxford man, was a prisoner, and subsequently his wife received notification that from the authorities that they were unable to trace him and so he was reported "missing." However, in actual fact, Gunner Dimes

was in a German prison camp, where he attempted to escape, but was captured and punished. With typical British tenacity he "tried again" and this time was successful. As a result, Gunner Dimes is now spending a well-earned leave at his home at 131 Station Road, Histon. Before the war he was a mail van driver, at Royston Post Office, but, being a reservist, was called to the Colours at the outbreak of hostilities. He would not tell of the conditions in a prison camp, nor of his escape, but when questioned as to what the food was like, said "Not so good."

1942 05 29

Stationmaster. Railway passengers and others in the Royston area (says Watchman) will learn with interest of a staff change involving a popular railway official. He is Mr. George Green, who has been well-known in the town as Chief Clerk at the local station, and who has now been appointed Stationmaster at Meldreth and Melbourn. In the last war he lost a leg at Builecourt; but this handicap did not damp his enthusiasm upon the formation of the Home Guard in the town, and he became one of the original local members. And he is now Company Sergeant Major- testimony not only to his keenness, but to the recognition in higher quarters of his useful military experience. 42 05 29

1942 06 12

Honour for Col. E. C. M. Phillips. The Territorial Army has once again been recognised in the King's Birthday Honours List. Col, Eric Charles Malcolm Phillips, D.S.O., T.D. D.L., of Earl's Hill, Royston, who now becomes a C.B.E, (Civil Division), is Chairman of the Territorial Association of the county of Hertford. Col. Phillips served with the Hertfordshire Regiment in France and Belgium during the Great War, In recognition of his services he was appointed Companion of the Distinguished Service Order on January 30, 1920, He was mentioned in dispatches on May 25, 1918, and was awarded the 1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. In 1923 he was awarded the Territorial Decoration. Col Phillips has been a military member of the Territorial Army Association since 1931. He is at present rendering valuable service as Zone Commander. Home Guard.

1943 01 08

Golden Wedding on New Year's Day. On Friday. Mr. and Mrs Samuel Birne of the Golden Rose, Emmanuel Road Cambridge, celebrated their' golden wedding on New Year's Day. Mr. Birne, who, at the age of 73, has just recovered from a serious stomach operation, is well-known in the sporting world as a former racehorse trainer, and a sports correspondent. Until the start of the present war, he was Royston correspondent for the "Sporting Life," the "Sporting Chronicle" and the Press Association. He had served in this capacity for these newspapers for 50 years and for the P.A. for 40 years. He once had his own training establishment at Royston. This he closed owing to the Heath restrictions in 1904 although he kept on a stable with a few horses. Mr. and Mrs. Birne were married in London in 1893, and have had three sons and two daughters, all of whom have married.

1943 03 18

Inquest at Royston into soldier shot through abdomen in camp on March 14th – 43 03 18

1943 09 17

Country Mansion Blazes. Newsells Park, the beautiful Queen Anne country mansion home of Sir Humphrey de Trafford at Royston, was badly damaged by fire on Wednesday night. Sir Humphrey told a reporter that only the walls were left standing. "Fortunately" he said, "all my own possessions had been removed. My wife and I live in a cottage 100 yards down from the house, and Lady de Trafford was awakened early this morning by screams. Two girls had to be rescued from the top floor with the help of ladders," Sir Humphrey hopes that his valuable cellar, which was bricked in, has not been ruined.

1944 01 19

Royston Hospital closes as is unable to obtain domestic staff – 44 01 19

1947 03 05

Bus passengers stranded this morning when their vehicle ran into a 5 ft drift on the Harston-Fowlmere road, walked waist-high through the snow to another bus. A "Clippie" accompanied them. The 7.40 Premier Travel coach from Royston to Cambridge was stuck in the drift for 3½ hours. A snow-plough called in to its assistance was itself stuck about 300 yards away. Several roads in the district were completely blocked this morning after last night's blizzard. Worst local road, classified by the A.A. as "very dangerous" is the Cambridge-Huntingdon thoroughfare where the snow has been wind driven into three and four foot drifts

1947 09 05

Out of the remains of the Priory Grounds at Royston there is about to be created a centre of open-air recreation that will be worthy, not only of the town, but of the Glorious Dead, whose Supreme Sacrifice it will call future generations to honour. This week there is being launched an appeal for the final £1,000 needed for the provision of this, the townspeople's chosen Memorial to the Fallen of the Second World War. Work has already been started by direct local labour, but other special skilled work will be needed to install the tennis courts, erect fences and entrance gates etc and, in view of the ever-increasing cost of materials, it is advisable to proceed with the utmost speed.

1948 12 31

After a final interview with the Ministry of Health Royston Urban District Council have now almost completed the details of taking over the huts occupied in the Heath P.O.W. camp. Details fixed were that a supply of electricity should be made available, that water supply be given to each hut and sinks fitted where necessary. Fixed baths be not fitted, but each hut be provided with a galvanised portable bath, and also an electric wash boiler with a draw-off to the bath

1949 11 25

"Ben", the talking dog owned by Mr Alfred Brissenden of Royston, is to make another broadcast. Now eight years old "Ben" will appear on the Light Programme. It will be remembered that "Ben" is no stranger to the microphone, having appeared in television "Picture Page" in September 1946, when he almost "let down the side" by mistaking a fellow artiste's fur coat for a cat. Eminent veterinary surgeons have examined "Ben's" vocal apparatus and have been considerably impressed by his accomplishment. Unfortunately when making his NBC broadcast in 1946, "Ben" developed mike-fright and it is hoped his performance on Thursday will reproduce perfectly for the delight of his many fans.

1953 11 21

Cambridge is fortunate in having the chance to see the film of the 1953 Everest Expedition so soon after its world premiere. Through the generosity of Associated British Cinemas nearly 8,000 schoolchildren will see it at a special morning performance at the Regal and groups will come in from Newmarket, Saffron Walden, Huntingdon and Royston to see the only pictorial record of a magnificent British achievement. Councillors, Justices and Masters of Colleges have also been invited

1954 05 03

County planners say that the object of Sawston's development plan is to assist in the distribution of Greater London population and to provide a 'safety valve' for industrial growth in the Cambridge area, otherwise expansion within the city might have to be accepted. If market towns such as Royston and Haverhill had been in Cambridgeshire the policy for expansion could be controlled and the Sawston plan could be dropped. It was in the best interests of the County to leave the matter open. But Coun Burkitt said they had no intention of suggesting London come to Sawston.

1954 06 25

RAF authorities are investigating reports that two parachutes were seen to appear from a Canberra jet bomber shortly before it crashed in a sugar beet field near Six Mile Bottom. It had taken off from Bassingbourn a few minutes before. The three crew, who include a Royston man, have been reported as missing believed killed but only one body has yet been found. Mystery surrounds the crash but the

finding of the aircraft's cockpit canopy in the Melbourn area indicates it might have become detached and been the cause of the accident. The plane hurtled into the ground in a field half-a-mile from the railway and made a hole about 40 feet deep, the sides of which collapsed almost burying the aircraft.

1954 07 08

Tom Abbott is one of the best-known heel and toe walking experts in Cambridgeshire. He started in 1925 when he saw an advert about the Cambridge Walking Club seven-mile road walk and by 1937 he held every walking record in the county – and still does. He has also won 30 championship medals. There was the E.H. Church Handicap Cup, a two-mile race in the Cambridge Railway Orphans Sports – he won it over a dozen times - the Royston to Cambridge road race held annually on Boxing Day, the ten-mile course along Newmarket Road and inter-county meetings without number. During the last war Army service races were won in Belgium and the Shetland Isles. Now he helps youngsters of the Coleridge Athletic Club.

1954 08 25

Messrs Kerridge of Cambridge staged a combined horticultural show and sports day on Pye's Sports ground when 100 children and 200 adults gathered from all parts of the Eastern Counties. A varied programme of races continued throughout the afternoon and there were also sideshows, including bowling for a pig. There were pony rides arranged by the Harston Riding School, a chair-o-plane roundabout and various other attractions including a comic cricket match. Mr P.D. Kenzie of Royston took eleven first prizes at the horticultural show

1954 10 01

The old Royston Brewery premises in Baldock Street, used until recently by an engineering firm, have been acquired by Messrs Barratt's, the well-known confectioners. The firm say they will start in a small way by packing goods made in their factory at Wood Green but will develop the site if the demand for their goods continues. The initial requirements will be for women labour for packing but men will be required if they start manufacturing there. "We like the look of Royston and feel sure we shall soon settle down and become accepted as one of the family", they say.

1955 04 15

Royston is to have an important new industry. Messrs Johnson Matthew & Co., engineers in and refiners of precious metals in various forms, propose to establish a chemical centre on the industrial site. This must be encouraging to all those who wish to see the town develop in the best way, for such an undertaking must bring many benefits in its train. They will employ some 250 some of whom will be local people. Roystonians will welcome the Company and receive their employees into the family community. 55 04 15b

1956 04 06

Royston Egg Packing Station, which has been operated by R.P. Kennedy and Sons for 24 years, has been acquired by United Dairies who will collect the eggs and take them to London for retail through their 600 branches. They will be available to customers within 48 hours of grading and testing and each egg can be traced right back to its original depot. 56 04 06b

1956 09 28

The ordinary motorist, the Sundays-only-man' would never dream of entering his vehicles for anything so nasty and horribly sporting as a motor rally. But the RAF Association rally is suitable for all ages and makes of car. Starting from Royston one veteran car came to rest half way up a steep hill and the driver hopefully prodded the grand old monster with a starting handle. But our new Standard 'Sportsman' with its three-speed gearbox fitted with overdrive on second and third, behaved splendidly. It costs just £1, 231. 56 09 28

1956 12 21

Dry Drayton Mothers' Union will soon receive a new banner thanks to a Royston girl. Margaret Williams is a keen and able needlewoman who when she puts the final stitch will have spent 700

hours carefully embroidering the banner made of blue brocade with gold silk lettering and white cross surmounted with a sheaf of lilies. It is nothing less than a work of art. 56 12 21

1958 10 23

Royston youths take banner from Priory Cinema – 58 10 23b

1958 11 28

An aeroplane on your farm! For the first time you can have guaranteed service for spraying and top dressing from the air. P.B.I. Aviation Division moves aerial farming from an asset for the few into a practical, reliable service for most of the intensive farming areas of Britain. Details from The Farmers Fertilizer Company, Royston - advert. 58 11 28d

1959 03 23

Quite a crowd gathered outside Mr W. Stephenson's stables in King Street, Royston, to see the homecoming of Oxo, winner of the Grand National. The scene was something like that of Derby Day 1951 when Arctic Prince also brought fame to the town's trainer. Royston is not given to wild displays of excitement, but there were many beaming faces and still more that evening in the 'local'. Even those unfortunate souls who were not 'on' the winner shared in the pride for Mr Stephenson and his extremely loyal employees. No other local trainer has even enjoyed such popularity and respect. 59 03 23b

1959 06 19

Mr Edwin Logsdon, founder of the Logsdon Garage at Royston, had been concerned with vehicles since the days of general horse-drawn traffic. At that time he operated open landaus and cabs from the Bull Hotel to the railway station and these turn-outs set the standards of smartness which has remained in their car-hire service. About 40 years ago he took over the Banyers property in Melbourn Street as a hotel and developed the garage business on the adjoining site. 59 06 19

1960 03 01

Cambridge should be granted County Borough status and so control its own destiny, the Local Government Commission recommends in its draft proposals. But Cambridgeshire would not then be an effective administrative unit and should be merged with the Soke of Peterborough, Huntingdonshire and the Isle of Ely to be able to provide a comprehensive range of services. Royston Urban District should join the new county but Newmarket should remain in West Suffolk and St Neots be transferred to Bedfordshire. Now the recommendations will be subject to public consultation. 60 03 01 & a

1961 08 01

Hopes that Cambridge would become a County Borough able to manage its own affairs have been dashed by the Local Government Commission. The improvement of county government should take priority: it could not be effective without the city and would have to be enlarged by taking in other areas. Cambridgeshire should join with the Isle of Ely to form one unit and the town of Royston should come into the area. The position of Newmarket has not yet been determined. 61 08 01

1961 09 02

The wheels and panels of an old farm cart which has been in the family of Mr & Mrs Robert Haywood of 63 Melbourn Road, Royston, for 60 years now form an unusual front garden fence. It serves a dual purpose for apart from brightening up the appearance of the house it also helps people to find Mr Haywood, who is a farmer and contractor in the town. 61 09 02

1962 01 01

Many Cambridgeshire villages are without electricity as eight inches of snow dislocated traffic and communications. Engineers had difficulties getting to the trouble through road blocks, fallen telephone wires and diversions. Snow ploughs have been working on the roads throughout the night.

Railways have been badly affected with a drift between Shepreth and Royston making only single line traffic possible. It was the coldest night in Cambridgeshire since February 1917 62 01 01

1962 10 03

Supplies of salt are fast running out at Cambridge grocery shops as people adopt a 'do-it-yourself' policy towards clearing away the snow from their doorsteps. In two of the largest stores stocks of block or crushed cooking salt are negligible. But there is still plenty at the Corporation store yard in Mill Road despite a considerable amount being used on the streets. Hard-packed frozen snow still prevails on all roads and overnight fog reduced visibility. One result of the snow-up in Royston was the postponement of the meeting of the Urban Council 62 10 03

1962 07 05

Transferring Royston into Cambridgeshire would be a 'disaster', the Clerk to Royston council told a Local Government Commission inquiry. Before 1896 the town was half in Cambridgeshire but then it was created an urban district in Hertfordshire. Any expansion of industry or population would come from Herts or London. Residents say their present council services are effective and convenient and any change would be a retrograde step. 62 07 05a

1963 02 02

Like other sport, golf has been hit by the appalling weather conditions with no play since Boxing Day at the Gog Magog course. The ground was frozen before then and the greens have not been fit to use since the middle of December: they are like lakes and the bunkers full of snow. At Newmarket greens are like frozen lakes, Girton's nine holes are completely waterlogged, St Ives frozen solid and the hilly course at Royston has drifts many feet deep. 63 02 02b

1963 02 28

London commuters are eligible for 100 per cent mortgages under a new 'home loans for all' plan by the London County Council. Loans will be made on any house or flat within a 50-mile radius of Charing Cross and will be available to those living in St Neots, Royston, Huntingdon or Haverhill regardless of income. Repayment can be spread over 25 years. The only restriction is that the value of the property must not be more than £5,000. Estate agents predict it will not have a dramatic impact on Cambridge. 63 02 28

1963 04 24

Royston Priory Memorial Gardens to have fountain to commemorate American airmen of 91st Bomb Group who died on missions from Bassingbourn. 63 04 24a

1963 06 07

Royston railway bridge is being reconstructed to provide a wider road and footpaths with vastly improved visibility and more head clearance for rail traffic 63 06 07

1963 06 07

Royston cave – feature – 63 06 07b

1963 08 23

Royston's population could rise by 4,000 to about 10,400 by 1973 with additional 110 acres for residential purposes, more space for industry and a new school on the former Militia Camp under new planning proposals. – 63 08 23

1964 02 24

Royston Cave, the centuries old excavation, has been closed for two years because of difficulties over entrance – 64 02 24

1964 03 05

Royston new railway bridge nears completion – 64 03 05a

1964 03 20

Royal hunting lodge, Kneesworth Street, Royston – history – 64 03 20b

1964 04 03

Royston Priory Memorial Gardens feature – 64 04 03b

1964 05 05

King James' hunting palace, Royston to be restored – 64 05 05c

1964 06 11

Royston railways in Victorian times recalled – 64 06 11

1964 07 25

Royston Social Club members were bold enough to buy the Manor House, a gracious 18th century residence off Melbourn Street in 1949. Today it is the town's most popular social centre. With two billiard rooms, a lounge, card room and bar it offers facilities and informality to its 500 members. Formerly home of the Phillip's family it was requisitioned by the military during the war. Now rooms are leased to firms for offices and an annexe formerly used by the county library has been demolished.
64 07 25

1964 08 27

Royston's Eagle Tavern area soon to have piped water – 64 08 27

1964 10 16

Royston cave treasures – 64 10 16

1964 11 02

The gas-holder at Mill Road industrial site, Royston is to be retained as a reserve, though the main supply is piped direct from Cambridge. Although 50-years old, it was constructed soundly and has been kept in good condition. Another will be kept in service together with the fairly new 'waterless' holder at Stamford Avenue. A wall will be built to separate it from the new industrial site on which the council plan to build small factory units. One gas-holder was removed when the Urban Council acquired the site 64 11 02

1964 12 09

King James I's 'Old Palace' in Kneesworth Street Royston – feature – 64 12 09a

1964 12 16

When Artic Prince won the Derby in 1951 Royston streets were decorated with flags as it was welcomed back to Willie Stephenson's training stables. He established the thoroughly modern 'Tudor Stud' at Aspenden with 100 beautifully-equipped boxes after the Newmarket area became terribly 'horse sick'. Royston has been a racing town for well over 300 years with annual races dating back to the time of James I whose stables known as 'The Jockey House' were just beyond the end of the present heath. 64 12 16a

1964 12 21

Henry Andrews moved to Royston in 1766 and compiled Old Moore's Almanac; his portrait hangs in the reference section of Cambridge public library – feature – 64 12 21

1965 01 20

Royston expansion problems – feature – 65 01 20

1965 04 08

Heath Lodge Hostel protest at Royston councils view on homelessness – 65 04 08a

1965 04 08

Reuters news agency monitors Russia from Green End House, Royston – feature – 65 04 08e

1973 10 17

News that Royston could finally have a new sewage works in three years was greeted by town councillors with relief tempered with scepticism. It is 21 years since a new works was called for in 1952. In recent years the council have lived through a saga of complaints from farmers about crop damage due to sewage flooding, petitions from tenants about smells from the old works at Coombes Hole, and increasing difficulties in dealing with the quantity of sewage from the town which culminated with a brake on further housing development when the works could no longer cope. But Bassingbourn village have complained about losing land for the scheme

1974 01 30

Meldreth has nearly doubled its population during the past 10 years from less than 900 in 1962 to about 1900. About one third of the population increase could be attributed to the Manor School run by the Spastics Society. It is now the major source of employment in the village although the biggest employers are the Atlas Stone Co. Ltd. just outside the village. Planners say the electrification of the Royston – Kings Cross railway line will undoubtedly create development pressures.

1974 04 17

There have been big changes in shopping habits at Royston over the past decade and now, with addition of a new supermarket and extensive modernisation of many stores, the town can boast that they are able to cater for all the major needs of the modern family. Easily accessible by car, bus or train, it has become increasingly popular among a wider range of neighbouring villages whose inhabitants have found other shopping centres too inaccessible or too congested. Royston with its pedestrian precinct does not have either of these worries.

1974 07 16

Royston has allowed itself to be spoiled; it lacks shopping facilities; it is an expensive place for housing; and it is a town in limbo not knowing whether it should turn to Cambridge or North Hertfordshire, says Prof. Parry Lewis in his planning report. “This is a town that is surrounded by extremely beautiful countryside containing several villages of delightful character and appearance. As one approaches there is an expectation of something that might perhaps have something of the quality of Saffron Walden. The expectation is rudely disappointed”, he says.

1974 08 13

Many shops in Mid Anglia are trying to beat the sugar shortage by selling specially-imported supplies, and customers are eager to buy the new stocks although they are having to pay 20p a kilo (almost 2¼ lb). British produced sugar has been selling at about 11½p for 2 lb. At Royston two main supermarkets have been hit by the sugar shortage. The Spar stores in High St, Hemingford Grey had imported sugar at the weekend and demand was so great they sold out by Saturday evening. Two Haverhill supermarkets have no supplies of sugar this week.

1974 09 21

Housewives in Mid-Anglia who are stripping the shops of salt were described by shopkeepers and suppliers as mad and hysterical. The panic buying has been caused by false rumours and there is no shortage. Supermarket managers reported selling stocks that usually lasted three weeks in a day and a half. “This whole city has gone crackers”, said one manager. The International Stores on Market Hill, Cambridge, sold out during the week. At Lipton’s in Royston a delivery which normally would have lasted all week, sold out on the same day. At St Neots the Co-op sold out within an hour of delivery

1975 02 06

Royston's oldest inn, the Old Bull is now able to take more residents thanks to a six-bedroomed extension. Bargain weekends are one of the innovations brought in by the new proprietors. For £13.50 they offer accommodation for two nights and a dinner dance on the Saturday evening.

1977 01 06

A 19-year-old girl from the Royston area is in Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, with polio. It is the first case reported in the region for several years. The Hospital stressed there was no need for undue concern but urged members of the public to check their own vaccinations, which is taken by mouth on a lump of sugar. In 1975 only one case of polio was reported nationally. Last year it rose to eight. It is believed the Royston girl is the second victim so far this year

1977 04 04

Haslingfield's new Methodist church was officially unlocked by the oldest member of the congregation, Miss Grace Huddleston, for many years organist at the old chapel. It will have as its minister the Rev Denzil Sutcliffe of Royston. Standing in part of what was once the Manor House garden, the new church replaces a century-old building which is being retained for use as a creche.

1977 09 24

Locals in Burwell cast a quizzical eye over the new thatched roof of a cottage in High Street. From a distance it looks the same as any other. But close up something appears to be different. The thatch is made of fibreglass sheets, screwed to the roof. It costs slightly more than a normal thatch but has been treated to make it fireproof, needs no maintenance and will last far longer than a straw or reed thatch. The product is manufactured by Fibrethatch, a Royston firm. Whatever the benefits the roofs are bad news for birds. They will not be able to burrow their way in to nest.

1977 09 28

Royston has become one of the dirtiest and shabbiest little towns in Hertfordshire, according to one man who has to contend daily with a litter problem outside his home in Kneesworth Street. At night armed with a broom and dustbin bag he collects up piles of chip bags, sweets and cigarette wrappings, tissues and tin cans. A mechanical roadsweeper came down the street sometimes and he once swept the rubbish into the gutter. "The driver, believing I had emptied out household rubbish into the road, stopped his vehicle and pushed the whole lot back into my drive", he said

1978 05 24

The dedication of a memorial to American GIs based at Bassingbourn during the war gave a Cambridge woman an excuse to wear her black hat, which is 37 years old. "I wear it with pride as it is a wartime relic", she said. Doris Foster, who used to be the landlady of the Angel public house at Royston, failed to recognise one of her wartime regulars Sam Cipolla from Chicago. But he remembered her: "I used to sneak under your fence to get a pint & used to give sweets to the children who called me Uncle Sam", he said. He may have recognised the hat which she often wore while serving in the bar because the Americans liked it.

1978 10 20

About 150 people have signed a petition protesting against District Council plans to spend up to £4,000 on a skateboard rink at the recreation ground in Newmarket Road, Royston. Campaigners fear that the proposal to use the area both as a skateboard rink and a car park could be hazardous to both children and motorists. They are also worried about more youngsters being attracted: "There is already a lot of vandalism, bullying and noisy larking about", they complain. Royston town council agrees that any money for skateboarding should be spent at the Meridian Centre where there is already a skateboarding park run by a youth worker.

1978 12 12

Royston Town Council planners approved an application to turn the north wing of The Rookery in Kneesworth Street into a restaurant with parking for 20 cars. "This is exactly what this town wants – a

good restaurant”, said Coun. Duncan Ferguson. But the mayor, Coun Alison Nicholls had grave doubts about it. “I don’t want a restaurant there; if it is a nice one I won’t be able to afford it and if it isn’t a nice one I won’t like it”, she said.

1979 05 22

Any attempt to put London’s third airport in the Essex countryside will be bitterly resisted by the two villages near Saffron Walden that have been marked out as possible sites. The Government’s study group has picked out Stansted and Langley for further examination. The latter would have a horrendous effect on Royston and south Cambridgeshire. It would overturn the peace, quality of life and happiness everyone is used to and be part of a huge conurbation where noise and money took the upper hand. The chairman of the parish council said: “I am horrified. We have fought it before under another name – Nuthampstead. Why are we being subjected to it again”

1979 06 09

A new town might be built on the Cambridgeshire-Essex- Hertfordshire borders within the next 15 years if the proposed third London airport is developed at Langley or Stansted. The only alternative would be expansion at Royston. The airport would handle 50 million passengers a year and employ up to 50,000 people but this would aggravate the present labour shortage of skilled workers. It would add to the influx of tourists to Cambridge, which is already at a very high level and cause a serious noise nuisance that would make life unpleasant for people in the Duxford area. But on the brighter side opportunities for business and holiday flying for residents should be greatly improved.

1979 06 14

The battle to defeat plans for a third London airport near Cambridge has been backed by the County Council who have asked the Government not to build in anywhere in the southern part of the county. But if Whitehall turns down the plea and suggests it should be built at Langley near Royston or Stansted it could cost ratepayers a lot of money. Estimates for employing one range of specialist advisers – the noise experts – could cost £80,000 and this could be just the tip of the financial iceberg. It would lead to intolerable noise, massive congestion on the roads and cause vast housing problems that would ultimately lead to the need for a new large town. Coun Dennis Fuller said he could not think the Government was being serious in asking for a third airport at a time when the world’s energy reserves were in a crisis.

1980 10 02

Fowlmere’s new bus service to Royston received an amazing response. Organisers expected half a dozen people but instead there were 37 passengers. This is the kind of service the county’s transport co-ordination department has been set up to promote. It fulfils a need without costing a fortune. Diverting the bus through the village only adds 10 minutes to the journey time. The fare from Fowlmere to Royston is 38p. single 80 10 02

1981 12 14

Motorists faced a nightmare journey to work with several main roads blocked by heavy snow. Saffron Walden was snowed in & Royston and Haverhill were cut off as was Cottenham, Waterbeach, Fulbourn and Sutton. Cambridge police rescued 130 people trapped in their cars and about half the county schools were closed as teachers could not get to work. 81 12 14

1982 04 03

A racehorse trainer has been told to repair his nine historic buildings in the Upper King Street, Royston. They are a very important part of the town centre; some date back to the 17th century but have fallen into a very neglected, dilapidated state. Vandals are constantly breaking in, smashing windows and doors. Now they will be boarded up by the council. 82 02 03a

1982 04 05

Royston’s image as a congested carbon dioxide bottleneck is to change. No longer will it be a place to avoid on holiday weekends with spluttering nose-to-tail traffic and irritable kids screaming from the

back seat. Even the Queen has been trapped in traffic. Now with the opening of the four-mile bypass, finished four months ahead of schedule, the town can breathe again. 82 04 05

1982 04 07

Years of misery experienced by Royston residents ended when a 77-year-old veteran car led a cavalcade along the town's new bypass. The 1905 Argyll was driven by Dr Derek Nicholls, marking the triumphal end of years of campaigning. The by-pass, opened four months ahead of schedule, had an immediate effect. At 10 am heavy vehicles were ploughing through the town's main road, by noon they had gone. 82 04 07

1982 09 13

The Old Palace in Kneesworth Street, Royston, once part of a Hunting Lodge for King James I, is a grade one listed building. It belongs to the Leete Charity which is unable to meet £100,000 repair costs. Now it has applied for permission for change of use from residential to offices and may sell the property to people who can restore and maintain it. 82 09 13a

1983 01 20

Railway stations at Cambridge, Ely, Newmarket, Audley End, Stansted and Royston could be closed if a Government plan is accepted. Even the electrified Hitchin to Royston line would be abandoned, leaving only the London to Norwich line in East Anglia. Bus services would be provided instead. By cutting BR to the prime Inter-City routes it would be possible to produce an annual profit of £34 million for a 'commercially viable railway'. 83 01 20

1983 02 04

To shop or not to shop on Sunday – that is the question facing MPs. The strongest supporters of the change are Isle of Ely Liberal MP, Mr Clement Freud, who is a sponsor of the bill, and Saffron Walden MP, Alan Haselhurst. Robert Rhodes James (Cambridge) thinks it goes too far but Francis Pym (Cambridgeshire), John Major (Huntingdonshire) and Royston MP Ian Stewart are open to persuasion. 83 02 04a

1983 06 24

A new plant – which cost more than £10 million – has opened at the Johnson Matthey site at Royston. It will refine metals like platinum and gold and is their biggest capital investment since they came to the town in 1956. When in full operation it will employ an additional 50 people. 83 06 24 p11

1983 08 12

Ben the Bus, the friend of shoppers in the Royston area for 15 years, has become the latest victim of the economic climate. The single-decker Leyland, operated by Ben Martin of Litlington Post Office, will no longer be selling groceries because the piston of the engine is broken. It was in February 1968 he started delivering to local villages, later concentrating on Royston housing estates. His trade has also been hit by a new shop in Burns Road and the cost of keeping the 52-seater on the road. 83 08 12 p14

1983 09 16

The railways could be on the brink of another Beeching. Under the British Rail five year plan they want to introduce single-line track in places along the Ely-King's Lynn system, reduce the East Coast main line from four to three tracks between Huntingdon and Peterborough and make the Cambridge to Newmarket line a single track. They also hope to extend the electrification of the Royston line. 83 09 16 p1

1984 03 31

Royston has been described as 'down market' by villagers and companies in Melbourn who say it does not have the same glamour that Cambridge has, particularly for the growing number of computer companies wanting to attract an American market. They want their postal address changed to Cambridgeshire. But the town's mayor, Mrs Judy Cresswell is not insulted by the down-market tag

and admits that when she is abroad she says she comes from Cambridge because it is known all over the world. 84 03 31 p3

1984 04 03

Royston's new museum has won a Civic Award for the renovation of its new home, a former United Reformed Church schoolroom in Kneesworth Street. It has been rescued from near dereliction and the interior refurbished. But the new Gateway Supermarket in the town centre was criticized for its haphazard layout and its 'mass of tarmacadam'. 84 04 03 p8

1984 04 12

Thirty years ago Royston was a quiet market town of barely 4,000 people. Today the population has nearly trebled and is still on the increase. There have been growing pains as its facilities strain to keep pace with the booming population but a new library, police station, museum and old peoples' homes are on the way. Run-down properties in the town centre need a new lease of life and there is need for the electrification of the railway line to Cambridge. 84 04 12

1984 04 18

Firemen battled for several hours to control and blaze which swept through the Johnson Matthey chemical works in Royston. Explosions broke out as they used foam to prevent the fire spreading and people were warned to stay indoors as the thick black smoke filling the sky might be toxic. "It looked like a bomb had hit it" a senior fire chief said. A year ago one man died and 26 others were injured in another major fire at the plant. 84 04 18 p1

1984 04 18

An amazing subterranean secret could lie below the surface of Royston town centre. The historic and mysterious Royston cave has two duplicates close by, according to an underground researcher. Using new secret techniques he made his discovery while his wife was on a shopping trip. He reckons there are bones inside the new caves, which could be supported by central pillars. Archaeologists have called for diggers to be called in but there must be geological tests first to assess if they are really there. 84 04 18 p6

1984 05 08

Hooligans turned on gas rings and lit tea towels in an attempt to blow up St Mary's Primary School at Royston. But the lethal mixture failed to explode and head teacher Sister Veronica discovered the damage on the way back from church. She found broken windows, smelled the gas and then phoned the police. "It was a wicked thing to do because there could have been such an explosion she said. 84 05 08 p1

1984 07 21

Top-selling author Jeffrey Archer opened Royston's new Platignum factory which already makes almost a million pens a week. More than 200 people are employed at the new plant which moved from Stevenage to the Orchard Road industrial estate. The factory is just in Cambridgeshire and that was one of its major attractions: it means a lower rate bill. 84 07 21 p1

1984 10 11

A new scheme to revolutionise Royston's rubbish collection has run into opposition. Thousands of homes have been given new bins on wheels but people object to having to push them through their houses, over carpets and up and down steps as well as moving the furniture out of the way. The environmental health director says he appreciates the difficulties and will provide people with sacks. Miner's leader Arthur Scargill has followed in the unlikely footsteps of Kaiser Bill in having his effigy strung up at Caxton Gibbet. The gibbet was last used for a real hanging in 1750 for a mail-coach robber from Royston but in 1919 someone used it to string up 'the Mad Dog of Europe'. Now they are in use again with an effigy of Mr Scargill which appeared overnight bearing the words 'Scargill, Scum of the Earth. No one has claimed responsibility and Caxton villagers are staying silent. 84 10 11 p5

1984 11 23

Bowls, once the pensioners' preserve, is now attracting teenagers. Seventeen-year-old Roger Evans from Royston is their senior three-wood singles champion as well as Chesterton indoor club's under-18 champion. Greg Harlow, 16, from Ely who is a keen rugby, squash and soccer player also rates bowls as his top sport. "There are getting to be as many youngsters as old men in the game now", he observes. David Cornwell, who was barred from Ely's bowls greens and had to play at Littleport when he was 12, is now recognised as one of the country's brightest bowls innovators and has been asked to prepare a scheme for a national under-21 championship. 84 11 23

1986 04 11

A controversial plan may clear stalls from Royston Market Place to allow short-term parking. 86 04 11a

1987 03 23

A new style electric train took just 47 minutes to travel from London to Cambridge breaking the previous speed record of 55 minutes set by a steam loco in the late 1950s. The train brought a group of VIPs to the city for a ceremony to mark the opening of a £650,000 revamp to the railway station. There are new offices and lavatories together with a telephone inquiry bureau while outside the forecourt paving has been extended and trees planted. It is part of a bid to improve train services, which includes electrification of the line to Royston 87 03 23

1987 07 21

A steam engine fell from a low-loader on the Royston by-pass after the anchoring chains broke, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. The engine's roof was ripped off as it somersaulted on to the verge. Both the rear and front axles, the flywheel and the crankshaft of the Burrell steam engine, built in 1907, were smashed. Firemen were called to clear the coal which was still hot following a show of steam engines at Thetford. 87 07 21

1987 08 29

Royston is being plagued by cats. There are so many moggies in the triangle between Sun Hill, Coronation Avenue and Briary Lane that residents have called on the town council for help. Mr Bernard Butler said it's got beyond a joke. The cats, which he reckoned number up to 50, messed his garden and lawn every morning. Mr Robert Taylor of Sun Hill often finds several in his garden shed and has bought a dog especially to keep them off his house. Over the years wild cats have moved into the area; a few residents have been feeding them which has resulted in a population explosion 87 08 29

1987 09 18

Royston Hospital faces closure as Herts Health Authority needs to cut costs. Most GP in-patient beds are based there or at Letchworth and it provide patients with respite care, convalescence and minor treatment. Royston has cared mainly for the elderly since the closure of its maternity unit two years ago. The Friends of Royston Hospital, which has raised over £50,000 says it provides a valuable and much-needed service 87 09 18b

1988 02 23

Royston's battle of the buses has begun as Premier Travel's new red, white and blue mini-buses picked up their first passengers on the town-link route. They offered free rides for pensioners although the normal rate will be 20p for a single journey. But there were only a handful of passengers taking advantage of them. Cambus will also offer free rides when it launches a rival service on Saturday though the regular fare will be 5p more. 88 02 23

1983 03 17

Royston hospital has been saved from closure after North Herts health authority decided to turn 18 beds over from GP to geriatric care without jeopardising out-patient services. 88 03 17b

1988 04 14

Pensioner Fred Holman from Trumpington, who trains his birds by bus, has won one of the first big homing races of the season. His pigeon was the first of more than 1,000 in a race from Salisbury, winning first prize for the Cambridge South Road Flying Club. It was the latest success in a booming career stretching back to his days as a 13-year-old schoolboy in London. Twice a week he catches a coach to Royston or Baldock to set his birds free for training flights back to his home in Byron Square where he has a loft of 20 racing pigeons 88 04 14b

1988 04 22

Cambridge to Royston goes electric. Gala day on Bank Holiday Monday with personal appearance by TV personality Gary Wilmot, live music, exhibit of railway rolling stock and special shuttle service of electric trains free to everyone on the day between Cambridge and Royston. 88 04 22

1988 04 22

Royston auction market started in July 1931 and used to attract buyers from London. But wholesalers have killed off the trade. It still sells poultry, vegetables, eggs, fruit and game, although the shelves have a fraction of the amount they used to when 750 birds would be caged ready for sale. But there is still a thriving furniture auction selling old 78 records, sewing machines and picnic hampers. Now the Fish Hill market is closing for good and porter Tom Housden will ring his hand-bell to call people to buy for the last time. 88 04 22a

1988 05 05

Royston could become a town with no kids if nothing is done to provide cheaper homes for young families. With very little accommodation priced under £60,000 people could not afford to have children since the mortgage on their flats was too high. One couple bought a modest terrace house in Queens Road for £42,000 last year but now cannot meet the £280 monthly payments. It has been sold to a Cheshunt couple living half-an-hour away who say it would cost double there. Now officials are to discuss a shared-ownership scheme with houses built on council land and councillors nominating who lives in them. 88 05 05a

1988 06 22

Elderly people are languishing in hospitals miles from their homes because support services have collapsed. The senior specialist in geriatric medicine blamed a lack of hospital beds for long-term continuing care; elderly people spent weeks in hospital needlessly because there was no one to support them at home. He criticised plans to reduce the number of beds for elderly patients at Royston Hospital in a bid to save cash. 88 06 22

1988 10 05

A disused chapel in Kneesworth Street, Royston has been converted into an architect's office by the Burns Thompson Partnership. The timber-framed church was constructed in 1790 and eighty years later, the Victorians added a brick cladding. The traditional chapel had a balcony and attractive stained glass windows but many of the beams were rotten. Gravestones were removed from the front to make a car park but many are displayed in a small patio area at the back. 88 10 05a & b

1988 11 04

Royston's original cinema in Priory Lane was gutted in 1933 and reopened in Melbourn Street just five months later. However until recently it stood almost derelict through years of neglect and audiences were at an all-time low. Then Des and Margaret Shepherd and their partner Bob Lee took over. They gave it a fresh coat of paint, replaced the uncomfortable seats and installed modern equipment. In the last five years audiences have trebled. But the future is not secure: the lease runs out in two years and developers are hungry to get their hands on the prime building site. 88 11 04a

1989 06 20

The heat wave has boosted demand for water to unprecedented levels, reducing supplies at the tap to a trickle in the Cambridge area. They have never had to restrict water in their 136-year history and have

enough to cope with a 90-day drought, but with no end to the hot spell in sight, Cambridge Water is urging people to use water sparingly especially. Householders in Saffron Walden and Royston face a hosepipe ban. 89 06 20

1989 11 03

Royston plans for 450 houses, business park and recreation centre rejected – 89 11 03f